



WASHINGTON.

THE CURRENCY PROBLEM.

A PLAN FOR RESUMING SPECIE PAYMENTS AND AT THE SAME TIME INFLATING THE VOLUME OF CURRENCY.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)
WASHINGTON, Dec. 19.—An experienced banker, who has given great attention to questions of national finance, talking with a member of the Banking and Currency Committee lately, urged a plan for resuming specie payments and at the same time inflating the volume of currency for which the West and South are so clamorous. "Let the Treasury issue \$100,000,000 of bonds," he said, "and sell them for gold, and at the same time bring the greenback circulation up to \$400,000,000. The gold thus obtained with that now in the treasury, would be ample, according to experience under the old State banking system, to float the whole body of greenback circulation under a resumption of specie payments. Then let there be an additional issue of National bank notes to the extent of \$100,000,000, with a provision authorizing the banks to redeem their notes in either greenbacks or gold. The additional paper money thus secured, with the gold that would be released by resumption and thrown into circulation as currency, would afford inflation to the fullest extent required."

The objection of the member of the Banking Committee to this scheme was not that the inflation it provides for would be a damage to the country instead of a benefit, for he is an inflationist, but he said that resumption could not be maintained for any considerable time so long as the balance of trade is against us at the rate of \$10,000,000 a year. The gold would soon be drained from the Treasury, he argued, and then a corner would be made in Wall-st. to force the Government to suspend.

THE PRINTING ABUSE.

ANOTHER STEP IN THE DIRECTION OF REFORM—A BILL ADDED BY THE SENATE REPEALING THE LAW REQUIRING THE PRINTING OF DOCUMENTS FOR POPULAR DISTRIBUTION.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)
WASHINGTON, Dec. 19.—The Senate has taken another step toward reforming the public printing abuse. It has for several years been the law that of certain annual reports the public printer shall, without any resolution directing him to do so, print an extra number for general distribution; that is, make an edition of from 20,000 to 30,000 of them in addition to 1,000 printed for the use of the two Houses and those supplied to the Departments. One of those documents is the abridgement of the annual reports, of which the law requires 25,000. Mr. Anthony reported from his committee to-day a bill repealing the law requiring the printing of this document, and urged immediate action, since if the bill was not passed before the recess, the Public Printer would have to go on and get out the edition. A debate of course ensued, in which several Senators avowed themselves in favor of reviving the printing privilege, but opposed to allowing any more extravagant printing, unless a way of sending the documents free through the mails was devised.

Mr. Sargent said that the ink, presswork, paper, and binding for the agricultural report, now in type, should the House resolution pass, would cost \$138,000. Mr. Sherman moved to amend the bill by making it suspend all laws and resolutions authorizing extra documents to be printed for popular distribution, and the bill, as thus amended, was passed. Although the House did not act upon this bill, the Public Printer will not, probably, go on with the work during the recess. The passage of this bill by the Senate will suspend the printing of the following, among other documents: 10,000 copies of the report on exports and imports; 35,000 copies abridgement annual Executive reports; 7,000 copies commercial relations; 6,000 copies diplomatic correspondence, two volumes.

It is but fair to the Public Printer to state one fact that Mr. Anthony mentioned in the debate to-day, and that is, that all of the blanks, &c., used in the several Departments are now printed at the public printing office at half the cost to the Government which would be charged by outside firms. The fault is not that the printing that is done costs too much, but that there is too much of it done. For this, Congress alone and not the Public Printer is responsible.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS BILL.

THE BILL THE REGULAR ORDER IN THE HOUSE—SPEECHES BY MESSRS. BUTLER, BECK, AND RAINY.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)
WASHINGTON, Dec. 19.—The Civil Rights bill of the Judiciary Committee was the regular order in the House to-day, and short speeches were made upon it by Messrs. Butler, Beck, and Rainey. Mr. Butler wanted a vote to-day, but Alex. H. Stephens appealed for more time, saying that he wanted to debate the bill, and was not well enough to do so now. An arrangement was made for the discussion to continue until the second day after the recess.

The key note of the opposition to the measure on the part of the Democrats was struck by Mr. Beck, who argued that it infringed upon the constitutional rights of the States, by assuming for the General Government powers that belonged to them. He quoted a late decision of the Supreme Court to prove that United States citizenship and State citizenship were different things, and said that the rights of citizenship proposed to be enforced by the bill were not guaranteed by the Constitution or by the Fourteenth Amendment, but were matters for the States to regulate. He wanted the negro to have all his rights, but the bill would injure him instead of benefiting him. The effort to force black children into white schools would break up the schools and deprive the negroes of the opportunity they now had of getting an education. He detracted considerably from the efforts of what was an able speech by his intemperate conclusion, in which he charged that the object of the Republicans in passing the bill was to create a revolution in the South, so as to put it under a new rule again.

Mr. Rainey, a colored member from South Carolina, made a strong appeal for equal rights and privileges for his race, describing the insults which they have to endure because of their color; their exclusion from hotels, restaurants, and places of amusement, and saying that even when they paid the last debt to nature, which brought all men to a common level, there were discriminations made against them in the place of their burial.

THE HOLIDAY RECESS.

MOTIVES OF PUBLIC POLICY INDUCE SENATORS TO VOTE FOR THE ADJOURNMENT—BELIEF THAT THE SENATE WILL BE ABLE TO ACT MORE INTELLIGENTLY ON IMPORTANT QUESTIONS AFTER THE RECESS.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)
WASHINGTON, Dec. 19.—The Senate found out, to-day, what every careful observer of its proceedings knew before, that there were so many diverse views on the repeal of the Bankruptcy act that it would be impossible for that body to agree on any measure in two weeks, should it remain in session. Several Senators who voted for the holiday recess this afternoon, did so from motives of public policy. They say that the business of the country is improving day by day, and will be in a much more healthy condition on the 5th of January than it is now. The cry for expansion of the currency will not be so loud, and Congress will be able to act upon the financial question much more calmly than it would now. The majority of the writers speculate that have been made on this

SPANISH SURRENDER.

RELEASE OF THE PRISONERS.

THEY ARE TO BE BROUGHT TO NEW-YORK ON THE JUNIATA.

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Dec. 18, by way of HAVANA, Dec. 19.—The surviving passengers and crew of the steamship *Virginian* were delivered to-day to Commander Braine of the United States steamship *Juniata*.

They were sent on board that vessel, which soon after took her departure for New-York.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 19.—Our Consul-General at Havana telegraphs to the Secretary of State that the Captain-General had informed him that the *Virginian* prisoners were yesterday delivered to the commander of the *Juniata*.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 19.—The following dispatches were received here to-night:

U. S. STEAMER WORCESTER, KEY WEST, Dec. 19. The Hon. GEO. M. ROBESON, Secretary of the Navy, Washington.

Our Consul at Havana telegraphs that the *Virginian* prisoners were delivered to the *Juniata* yesterday and she sailed immediately for New-York. My dispatch to the commanding officer at Santiago, he says, was transmitted by telegraph and mail yesterday.

G. H. SCOTT, Rear-Admiral.
HAVANA, Dec. 19, 1873.
To the Secretary of the Navy, Washington:
Commander Braine telegraphs you as follows: SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Dec. 18.—The prisoners of the *Virginian* have been delivered to-day, 18th of December. I shall sail to-day for New-York. The *Kansas* and *Canandaigua* are here, awaiting orders.

HALL, Consul-General.
The *Virginian*, conveyed by the *Ossipee*, is now on her way to New-York.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)
WASHINGTON, Dec. 19.—The following has been received from a special correspondent:

KEY WEST, Fla., Dec. 19.—The *Fortune* left to-day, as expected, for Santiago de Cuba. It is reported here that the *Virginian* prisoners have been surrendered, and gone north on the *Juniata*.

LATER.—Admiral Scott has been officially informed from Havana to-night that the *Virginian* prisoners were peacefully surrendered yesterday. Details are not given.

MOVEMENTS OF THE VIRGINIANS.

HER DEPARTURE FROM THE TORTUGAS—NEW-YORK HER SUPPOSED DESTINATION.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)
WASHINGTON, Dec. 19.—The following has been received from a special correspondent:

KEY WEST, Fla., Dec. 19.—The *Virginians* left Dry Tortugas at about 12 o'clock last night under the convoy of the sloop-of-war *Ossipee*, and both vessels were spoken of Key West this morning. The *Virginian* left the Tortugas she had three or four feet of water in the hold, and was leaking so badly that the steam pumps were obliged to be kept going continually to keep the water down.

LATER.—Marix, the Flag-Lieutenant who brought the *Virginian* from Bahia Honda, was left at the Tortugas to report to Admiral Scott, and the *Virginian* is to go north in charge of Lieut.-Commander Woodrow of the *Ossipee*, Master Calhoun of the *Worcester*, and Engineer Landon of the *Saugus*. It is unofficially stated that the *Virginian* will be taken directly to New-York instead of Washington as at first announced. She has 22 tons of coal on board, but she will probably be towed by the *Ossipee* nearly at her destination, when she may make a spurt for the entrance into the harbor without assistance.

STATISTICS OF THE VIRGINIANS.

REPORTED DECISION IN REGARD TO HER RIGHT TO BEAR THE AMERICAN FLAG.

LONDON, Saturday, Dec. 20.—A. M.

Special dispatches from Madrid say there is great rejoicing there over a rumor that the Government of the United States has decided that the *Virginian* was not entitled to carry the American flag.

The *London Times*, commenting on the report, says such a decision would be consistent with truth and justice.

COMMENTS ON PRESIDENT GRANT'S MESSAGE.

THE REFERENCE TO SLAVERY IN CUBA SHARPLY RESENTED BY THE HAVANA PRESS.

HAVANA, Dec. 18, via Key West, Dec. 19.—The *Diario* of to-day comments on the President's Message. It says the person who telegraphed that the President expressed himself moderately in that part of the message having reference to Spain told an untruth. Certainly the President expresses the moderation of satisfied vanity and an aim accomplished in treating of the *Virginian* affair; but the paragraph about Cuba deserves the qualification of "infamous libel," given to it by *El Cronista*. The paragraph is a recapitulation of the insults, calumnies and vulgarities which have been published everywhere against the loyalists in Cuba, and which are now for the first time published in an official document which ought to distinguish itself by correctness, style and elevation of ideas. The *Diario* continues: "The President handles the question of the interior rule of Spain, the progress and solution of which belong exclusively to the constitutional powers within the Spanish nation. He assumes a species of protection or guardianship, which would make even the weak and pusillanimous bluish—which we repulse, preferring death to dishonor a thousand times. We protest against the document in the name of the Spaniards of Cuba."

The *Voz de Cuba* says of the message: "We have carefully read the document, which should form an epoch in American official literature." Of the part referring to the Island of Cuba the *Voz* says this is nothing but a repetition of the calumnies, elevated in numbers and language, in which the first magistrates of the Republic are accustomed to give an account to Congress, or rather to the nation, of its internal and external relations. It appears impossible that Mr. Fish could advise or consent to such a document. The President descends into regions to him unknown, and meddles with what is not his business. The interior affairs of the Spanish provinces are not under his jurisdiction, and surely he ought not to treat them in a manner so far removed from truth as from decorum. The *Voz* adds: "Let President Grant demand the surrender of the *Virginian* if his conscience permits; but he must let alone the political parties and interior matters of our country—things which are never to be meddled with. He should remember that no nation is more jealous than the American of similar interference, and as the pretensions of Great Britain were the prime cause of the war of 1812, we, imitating the noble conduct of the Americans of that time, are resolved to die if we cannot conquer, before allowing such interference and violation."

EXPENDITURES OF THE NAVY DEPARTMENT.

IMPLIED CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE GRANT OF \$4,000,000 WAS MADE—NAVAL PREPARATIONS CONTINUED AFTER THE NECESSITY HAS CEASED.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)
WASHINGTON, Dec. 19.—Although both Houses of Congress have, with remarkable unanimity, passed the bill appropriating \$4,000,000 for the extraordinary expenses of the Navy Department, consequent upon the late *Virginian* excitement, there were certain conditions, universally understood, on which the money was voted. The Secretary reported that he had not, at the meeting of Congress, exceeded in his expenditures the appropriations for the current year, but that the measures he had taken had

already almost exhausted the money of the working bureau of the Department, and that these must be supplied if the work is to go on. He further says in his letter of Dec. 8, that the amount required to reimburse the bureau so as to carry them through the year, and also to put all our available monitors in order, will not be less than \$4,000,000. If our force is to be increased, or if the powerful double-turreted monitors, Miantonomah, Monadnock, and Puritan, are to be put in a condition of usefulness, at least \$1,000,000 more will be required.

Since that letter was written, all danger of war with Spain has passed away, and the Secretary of the Treasury has discovered that the deficiency predicted by THE TRIBUNE months ago is already upon him. Every sane man in the country can now see that all extra expenditures on the navy should at once cease. Several Senators who spoke in favor of the appropriation voted a few days ago, expressed this popular conviction. It may, therefore, be fairly stated as among the conditions of the appropriation, that the exigencies under which our naval preparations were begun having passed away, all further expenditures looking to the putting of our navy on a war footing should cease. The \$4,000,000 was voted to enable the Secretary to meet the obligations already incurred and to carry on the ordinary business of the Naval Bureau, until the end of the fiscal year. Any part of it not needed for these purposes, he will be expected to return to the Treasury on the 1st of July next. He is not expected "to put all our available monitors in order," but the indications, coming from every part of the country during the past few days, are that the Secretary having got this large sum, supposes himself bound to spend it all, and that he is making new contracts in every direction.

A recent telegram from Norfolk, in reporting a reduction of force in the Navy-Yard at that place, says that the reduction is caused by a want of money, which, it was expected, would be supplied in a few days. Another dispatch from Philadelphia, printed this morning, announced that the monitor *Puritan* is to be put in order and work will begin upon it soon. From these and numerous other dispatches and reports, it appears that the Secretary of the Navy is not only continuing the work of the navy, but is also going on with the rebuilding of the *Virginian*, a class of vessels which every one knows were so hurriedly constructed that they will be of very little value when repaired, but he is also going on and preparing to do work which in his letter he says will require a million more. Prominent Senators and Representatives freely declare that it will be utterly impossible for the Secretary to obtain another dollar from the Treasury for the current fiscal year, should peace continue, but that he will, at the proper time, be held to the strictest responsibility for the expenditure of every dollar already appropriated. Any contracts made or work begun since peace has been assured will not be approved under the circumstances in which the Treasury now finds itself.

OTHER NAVAL INTELLIGENCE.

THE BROOKLYN NAVY-YARD.

The authorities at Washington have ordered the cessation of all extra labor at the Navy-Yard. The *Diatribe*, which went into the dry-dock at the Erie Basin yesterday, the *Roanoke*, the *Florida*, and the *Minotaur*, will go into commission in about 10 days. The *Atlantic Dredging* has been removed to the yard from the harbor, and is being used by means of a dredging machine. The contractors have stipulated to preserve the barge from all possible injury, and expect to complete the work in 12 days. As soon as the *Upland* is sufficiently lightened astern she will be gently raised sufficiently to pass chains under her; then screws will be placed on either side; this accomplished, the difficulty of raising the barge to the surface of the water will be comparatively slight. The *Upland* is highly rated as the prospect of a speedy release.

WORK AT THE NORFOLK NAVY-YARD.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)
NORFOLK, Va., Dec. 19.—The yard, yesterday, was the scene of a brilliant military display, the occasion being the arrival of Major James Lewis, who succeeds Lieut. Charles L. Sherman as commander of the Marine Corps at this station. The maneuvers of the corps were creditable to both officers and men. Two hundred barrels of rum for the Bureau of Construction and a large quantity of white oak timber arrived yesterday. The Savannah, now nearly completed, will not, it is thought, sail for her destination, Key West, until next spring. Thirty-six calkers were discharged to-day, and a number of shipbuilders will probably go to-morrow. The total number of men employed in all departments of the yard is now 1,231, which is considerably reduced. The work on the new *Galea* is continued. The *Upland* is being raised, and new slop-of-war will be received. The *Upland* is being raised, and new slop-of-war will be received. The *Upland* is being raised, and new slop-of-war will be received.

THE REVENUE CUTTER COLFAX AGROUND.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)
WASHINGTON, Dec. 19.—The following has been received from a special correspondent:

KEY WEST, Fla., Dec. 19.—The revenue cutter *Colfax*, Marine Corps at Key West, was driven ashore by a heavy sea, and was wrecked on the beach. The crew were rescued, and the vessel is now a total wreck. The *Colfax* was on her way to Key West, and was driven ashore by a heavy sea.

NAVAL ASSIGNMENTS.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 19.—The following orders were issued from the Navy Department to-day: The *Upland* is being raised, and new slop-of-war will be received. The *Upland* is being raised, and new slop-of-war will be received. The *Upland* is being raised, and new slop-of-war will be received.

ANOTHER EXPEDITION TO CUBA.

REPORTED LANDING OF FILIBUSTERS.

HAVANA, Dec. 18, via Key West, Dec. 19.—It is reported that a steamer named the *Santiago* de Cuba has succeeded in landing a filibustering expedition on the southern coast of the island, between Guantanamo and Santiago.

BRITISH SUBJECTS AMONG THE PRISONERS.

NAMES OF THOSE EXECUTED ON THE 7TH OF NOVEMBER—NAMES OF THE SURVIVORS.

Mr. Crawford, the Acting British Consul-General at Havana, has forwarded the Earl Granville the following list of British subjects among the prisoners of the *Virginian*, one containing the names of those who were shot at Santiago de Cuba on the 7th of November, and the other of those who remained in prison on the 8th of that month:

Shot on Nov. 7: James Flood, second mate; Henry King, assistant engineer; Thomas Griggs of Barbados, firman; Frank Good, Sierra Leone, coal trimmer; Bernard Ireland, firman; Henry Frank, Barbados, coal trimmer; James Reed, Sierra Leone, coal trimmer; Samuel Hard, Nazeau, N. P., coal trimmer; Alfred Hesel, coal trimmer; Walter F. Prince, coal trimmer; George Thomas, coal trimmer; Thomas Walter, chief steward; Henry Brown, second steward; William Ross, seaman; Simon Bond, seaman; and George Thompson, seaman.

Remained in prison on the 8th of November: William Cook, colored, 21 years; Samuel Hall, colored, 19 years; Sidney Robertson, 15 years; George Winstler, negro, 16 years; William Marshall, negro, 10 years; Abraham Finck, colored, 15 years; and George Burke, colored, 19 years.

ONLY ACCOUNT OF THE RELEASE OF THE VIRGINIANS.

JUST PRIDE.

THE TRIBUNE is justly proud of its achievements in getting the full account from the scene of the *Virginian* surrender at Bahia Honda. Like the father of his country, THE TRIBUNE is first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of its countrymen.

HARD APPRECIATION.

The *Herald* having been beaten in its role of newsmonger by THE TRIBUNE yesterday, acknowledges its defeat by struggling to get right again. THE TRIBUNE published the only special and graphic dispatch from the scene of the *Virginian* surrender at Bahia Honda. The *Herald* attempted to rival THE TRIBUNE's effort by confining itself to the fact that whereas its earlier editions contained nothing concerning the surrender, THE TRIBUNE had a dispatch, word for word, like that of THE TRIBUNE. And this morning THE *Herald* publishes a story partly untrue for its lack of enterprise yesterday, and partly untrue because "THE *Herald* schooner *Nonspareil*" had been intimidated by the Spanish gun and prevented from communicating with the vessel at the scene of the action. "What has been telling you," said my uncle Toby, "a story of a snail and a bait hook."

THE VILLE DU HAVRE.

A SURVIVOR'S STORY.

COVARDICE OF FRENCH SAILORS AND FIRMNESS—LIFE-PRESERVERS THAT HAD TO BE CUT LOOSE—A LEAP FOR LIFE.

The following letter has been received by Mr. R. A. Withams of this city from his son, who was a passenger on the ill-fated *Ville du Havre*:

HOTEL LIVERPOOL, PARIS, Dec. 5.

MY DEAR FATHER: I arrived here the night before last, very much tired, but in perfect health, after having witnessed scenes which I shall remember until my death, and after having been saved in almost a miraculous manner from an ocean grave by the mercy of God. I have so much to say that I hardly know where to commence; and as you will have had more or less accurate newspaper accounts of the loss of the steamer *Ville du Havre*, I shall confine myself to my own personal experience.

Very soon after leaving New-York we ran into a fog, which did not leave us definitely until the 20th of November; on the second day out we lost one blade of the screw, which of course diminished our speed, so that notwithstanding the favorable winds which we had, we were only on the sixth day out at noon about halfway of our journey. I had made but few acquaintances on board and spent most of my time reading. On Friday afternoon, the 21st of November, the fog cleared off definitely and we had a fine sunset. At about 10½ I went on the deck; the night was the most magnificent starlight one I have ever seen at sea. A pleasant breeze was blowing; we had a great deal of sail set and were going along finely through a tolerably smooth sea; the weather was so glorious that I remained on deck until about a quarter past 12 o'clock, when I went below and turned in. I had been asleep but a short time, when I was suddenly awakened by a tremendous shock and a loud grinding noise, which lasted only a few seconds. I jumped out of bed and, without attempting to explain to myself what had happened, pulled on a pair of trousers, boots, Ulster overcoat and hat, and so hurried on deck.

I was one of the first of the passengers to reach the deck. The engines stopped, and there was a quantity of debris lying on the deck. In looking upwards, I observed that but little of this had come down from our rigging, and then I ran to the starboard side and saw our bulwarks driven in for a length of fully 20 feet, and all the rigging of the starboard side cut away; while I was looking over the side, I saw that the steamer was settling in the water and the men were working at boats. I then made up my mind for the worst, and went aft to see what chance there was for me, in the boats, for two of these were already in the water; and as I came aft I saw them put off to the ship which had run us down, and which fortunately had kept aloft and hove to about one half of a mile under our stern. These two boats were filled entirely with French sailors and firemen! Some 40 men were making frantic and useless efforts to get another boat over the side, and half of these cowardly rascals were already in the boat.

Seeing that the crew was entirely demoralized, I gave up all hopes of being saved from the steamer by a boat, and looked around me for some means of keeping afloat when she should go down. Then I saw a man near me, hammering at the tailrail with a capstan bar, and on looking closer I saw he was trying to get a life-preserver loose. I then recollected having that very day seen a sailor's knife sticking in a sheath in the flagstaff; to run and get this was the work of a few seconds, and with two cuts I loosened the life-preserver for the man whom I had seen hammering at it, and whom I recognized as Monsieur Burbançon. I then went at the next one, which I secured for myself; then I gave the knife to a Mr. Belknap, who had broken all the blades of his pocket-knife in trying to cut a life-preserver loose. I remained at the extreme stern of the ship for two reasons—first, because there was little or no rigging over my head to drag me down in case the steamer should sink suddenly; and, secondly, because I had noticed that the bow was lower in the water than the stern, from which I judged that she would sink vertically, but go down at an angle, bow first, and therefore came more sure than forward than aft, which proved to be the case. After I had secured my life-preserver, I turned to see what was going on around me; as I looked forward I saw the mainmast lean over to leeward, first slowly, and then suddenly fall overboard with a terrific crash; the foremast and mainmast and the mizzenmast, which was dragged along with it, I knew that many persons had been killed or crushed more or less severely under the wreck. It then occurred to me, suddenly, that if I remained on board the steamer until she went down, that I would find myself in the water among a crowd of others, some of whom might seize and drag me down; so I took off my shoes, coat and hat, put on my life-preserver, got upon the rail, committed myself to the mercy of God Almighty, and jumped over the stern.

I sank, of course at first, and then came to the surface again; then, after getting the water out of my eyes, I turned around and just saw the stern and mast of the steamer going under; at a short distance from me I saw a piece of wreck, on which were two men who were scratched or bruised in various ways; as for myself, I had not as much as a pin-scratch. To describe the harrowing scenes which occurred on the ship *Loch Earn*, as boat after boat brought some half-drowned sufferers, is impossible; men and women, but alas! only one child, were brought in, naked or nearly so, almost frozen, half drowned, and all but three having lost some dear one, whose dying screams still sounded in their ears. The women had received a bad wound in the head, which I hope but temporarily destroyed his reason; his groans and howls were dreadful to hear. In the midst of all this, O how thankful I was! and especially so when I got on the fact of having been the only one of our family on this ill-fated steamer.

Owing to the head low in the bow of the *Loch Earn* (which was only kept aloft by a water-tight bulkhead over the foremast), we were transferred to the American ship *Trinidad*, Capt. Urquhart, and after eight days landed at Cardiff at 4 o'clock last Monday morning. From there I telegraphed to you in New-York and dear mother in Paris. The agent of the French steamship company furnished us with clothing enough to cover our nakedness, and gave us 26 sterling each. We reached London Monday night, tired and hungry, and on Tuesday I visited our cousin, Gabriel L. Withams, got from him £50 sterling, and on reaching Paris on Wednesday I found already a note from the Messrs. Munroe & Co. saying that they had received a cable credit for me from their New-York house; many thanks to your kind promptness. I have, of course, lost all my effects; but health and life are saved! I must close now to catch the post. Will write again by next mail. With best love, your devoted son, RUDOLPH A. WITHAMS, JR.

HOW COLLISIONS ARE LIKELY TO OCCUR.

NEGLECT OF LOOKOUTS—A CASE FROM EXPERIENCE—THE STATEMENT OF CAPT. SURMONT RE-VIEWED.

(FROM THE REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.)
LONDON, Dec. 6.—In all the reports of the *Ville du Havre* catastrophe there is nothing like an account of the causes of her collision with the *Loch Earn*. The officer in charge of the steamship is dead, and we shall never get his version of it unless the spirit-rappers will be good enough to rap it out of him. The sailors do not know or will not tell. The writer of a letter recently published is inclined, from his experience, to believe the lookouts on the forecastle were called away asleep under the bulwarks, which is possible enough. A more general theory is that

the *Loch Earn* was seen in time to avoid the collision, but that the officer on the *Ville du Havre*, miscalculating her distance or speed, believed he could run across her bows, and was cut down in trying. An incident in my own experience may throw some light on the question how collisions with a French ship may sometimes occur in seemingly impossible circumstances.

In the Autumn of 1869 I was a passenger on one of the steamers of the well-known *Messageries Impériales* from Marseilles to Alexandria. We found ourselves one moonlight evening making our way through the Straits of Messina. It was light enough to distinguish a ship some miles off, the shores of Italy and Sicily were clearly visible, there was no wind, the sea was still, and we were going about ten knots. A few of us who were on deck saw a brig some two miles distant standing across our bows. The moonlight falling on her sails made her a pretty object. As the steamer and the brig drew nearer, we rather wondered that the steamer neither slowed her engines nor changed her course, for it was plain that the two were coming very close. A few minutes later the brig struck the steamer amidships with a crash which brought down on deck all the canvas she had set—and she was under full sail—with yards and pretty much all her top hamper. Luckily for us, the brig at the last moment had put her helm hard up, and so struck us at an angle instead of bows on; otherwise we might have had a hole in our side like the unhappy *Ville du Havre*. Our engines were stopped amid a chorus of shrieks and curses from the brig, on whose deck, so far as we could judge, everybody had been either killed or wounded by the falling tackle. The captain of the steamer and the passengers rushed up from below, and for the next two hours we had an assembly nearly as noisy as the one now at Versailles, though better tempered. After it had been settled that we were not going to the bottom, and that our friends in the brig were uninjured except aloft, inquiry arose how such a thing could happen on such a night. It turned out that the officer of the deck and all the other officers were below, that the watch was asleep in the bows, and that the individual on the bridge in charge of the steamer was a quartermaster so near-sighted that he could not see ten yards in front of him, and of course he had not seen the brig at all.

The sworn statement of the captain of the *Ville du Havre* to the Collector of Customs at Cardiff is published. It leaves us pretty much where we were in respect to our knowledge of the causes of the collision. Capt. Surmont was asleep in his cabin on deck, woke without notice just before the collision, "though his strict and written orders were to be advised of the least incident that occurred," saw the *Loch Earn* "right ahead" as he left his cabin, rushed to the bridge, and reached it just as the collision took place. "My ship's helm," says Capt. Surmont, "had been put hard a-starboard, but we could not clear." When the helm was put hard a-starboard, the captain does not, probably cannot, say. Andrew Enault, a seaman on the *Ville du Havre*, who was one of the watch on deck, says that when he first saw the *Loch Earn* it was "by her figure in the water." He seems to mean her shadow in the moonlight. "He saw no lights till after she had settern, then saw them. The *Ville du Havre* had three lights burning brilliantly. It is just as much as ever a matter of conjecture how long before the collision the *Loch Earn* was sighted from the *Ville du Havre*, and whether it was then too late to do anything effectual, or whether the lights were seen in time and the wrong thing done by the steamer. As to the *Loch Earn*, she was, according to the reported testimony of Capt. Surmont, going close-hauled, and she had a right to the road whether she was or not.

A VALUABLE WORK OF ART LOST.

A Paris paper mentions that Meissonier's well-known picture, "The Three Friends," was lost in the *Ville du Havre*. It had been engraved, and was exhibited in Paris in 1848 and again in 1864. It was insured.

GENERAL FOREIGN NEWS.

THE ASHANTEE WAR.

THE KING OF DAHOMY AN ALLY OF THE ASHANTEES—FEVER AMONG THE BRITISH TROOPS.

LONDON, Friday, Dec. 19, 1873.

Dispatches from the Gold Coast announce that the King of Dahomey has joined the Ashantes. The fever continues among the British troops, and 100 invalids have been sent to St. Helena.

AFFAIRS IN CUBA.

A COLUMN OF SPANIARDS STRAPPED INTO AN AMBULANCE—CENSORSHIP OF THE PRESS.

HAVANA, Dec. 18, via Key West, Dec. 19.—Advices from insurgent sources state that a column of 200 Spaniards set out on Monday last to surprise a depot of arms and ammunition near Guaimaro, but fell into an ambush prepared for them by Gen. Maximo Gomez, with 600 cavalry. Only 200 Spaniards escaped. Their commander and 200 soldiers were killed, and the remainder were taken prisoners. The Cubans subsequently released the guerrilla Major Martelique and other officers, and after attending to the wounded sent them under the protection of the Spanish flag to a Spanish column under Col. Arminan has started in pursuit of the insurgent force.

Representatives of the Republican journals of Cuba have waited on the Colonial Minister, and presented a document remonstrating against the censorship, and declaring that their journals will be compelled to cease publication unless the rules are modified or abolished.

THE TROUBLES AT MATAMORAS.

EFFORTS TO PREVENT CONTINUA FROM BEING DE-CLARED ELECTED MAYOR—CORTINA'S FRIENDS UNDER ARMS.

MATAMORAS, Dec. 19.—There are apprehensions of serious troubles growing out of the election for Mayor of this city. Gen. Cortina, who received a majority of the popular votes, is obnoxious to the present city authorities, who are endeavoring